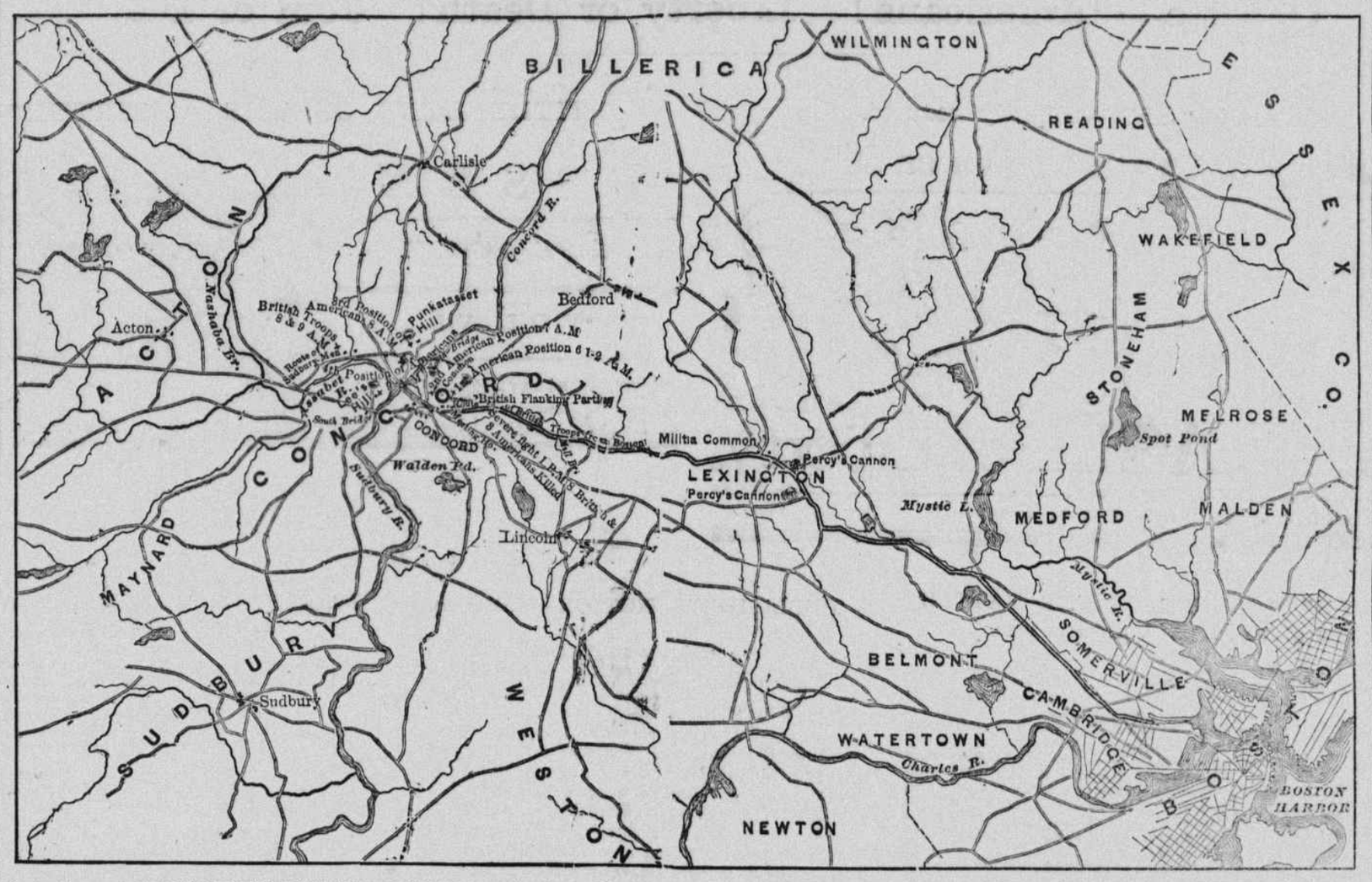
CONCORD—LEXINGTON.

Map Showing the Positions in the Memorable Fight and the Line of March of the British Troops from Boston to Concord.



CONCORD TOWN.

Interesting Sketch of the Revolutionary Birthplace.

UNCHANGING AND UNCHANGED.

THE TOWN OF CONCORD.

CONCORD, Mass., April 14, 1875.

Concord is indeed a pleasant town, and though Mr. James Russell Lowell has sung of its modern population that

——nowadays the bridge ain't wat they show
So much ez Em'son, Hawthorne and Thoreau,

it is the grandest village in all America in its past as well as its present. "Concord fight" has given it a history which no other town can justly claim, and it has, besides, maintained itself so well in bearing its proud pre-eminence that nobody will deny that it is in every way worthy of its history. People who have been sounding the praises of New England have made it typical of New England towns in general; but the truth is it is as much unlike the manufacturing villages as the adobe hamlets of New Mexico. In the factory towns the houses are not built in streets, but set up in rows. One dwelling is as much like another as the brother tenpins in a bowling alley. In Concord each house betrays the taste of its owner, and nearly every dwelling has its traditions and its story. Coming into the village by the Lexington road—the way the grenadiers came in 1775—the first building of note is the Wayside School in the house built by Hawthorne when he determined to desert the Old Manse. It is a wooden structure, two stories in height, and is surmounted by a little box overlooking the roof in which the sky romancist had his study. This box was accessible only by a trap, upon which the novelist placed his library chair, and, by thus keeping the world at bay, justified the lines of the poet in which he is described as one

——with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there.

A little further on and still nearer the village is Alcott's residence, the home also of his two gifted daughters. It is an old house, neglected in appearance, but surrounded by ample grounds, which are capable of being made very lovely in the springtime and summer. A rustic fence, now also much in decay, built of pine and cedar branches, gathered from the neighboring thickets and woven together by Mr. Alcott's own hands, encloses the grounds and separates them from the street. Across the way and still a little nearer the village, just before the turn of the road and the ridge, which forms the background of all this picture, reveals the more thickly settled part of the town, is the dwelling of Ralph Waldo Emerson. It is a square house, without pretensions, and lacks charms of any kind in its situation and surroundings. The ground on which it stands is low and almost marshy, and being across the street it has not the ridge behind it as have the others to lend it picturesqueness. Then comes the village proper, hugging the hill on the north and east and kissing the river to the south and west. Here the main street intersects the road, extending from a point opposite the old graveyard, which forms the centre of the ridge, almost in the direction of the old South Bridge, held by a company of British grenadiers April 19, 1775, while their comrades were being beaten a mile below. On this street is the house where next Sunday President Grant, like Hosea Biglow, is to go

——a-visitin' the judge,
Whose garding whispers with the river's edge.

Near to Judge Hoar's is the rural retreat of Mr. Frederic Hudson, whose "History of Journalism in the United States" is a proud monument to his own achievements in the journalistic profession. Thoreau, who was a recluse, lived farther away at Walden Pond, while near the North Bridge, where the first battle of the Revolution took place is the Old Manse, celebrated as the residence of the Rev. William Emerson, the grandfather of the Carlyle of Concord and the minister here in the Revolutionary era. Mr. Emerson witnessed the battle between the men whom his grandson has so grandly named the "embattled farmers" and the British grenadiers from an upper window of his house, which commanded a view of both positions, and he testified in his diary that after the invader discharged his first shot he "was uneasy till the fire was returned," though he knew that "their numbers were more than treble ours."

THE PROVINCIAL PARADE GROUND.

The spot overlooked by the bold and patriotic Concord clergyman, soon to become so famous in history, is now known as the Provincial Parade Ground. The English were first on the ground and held the town. It was a long wait which the patriots had that night, for Mr. Longfellow has told us in his cantering verse of the midnight ride of Paul Revere that—

It was one by the village clock
When he galloped into Lexington.

And the poet added, with something of poetic license, it must be confessed, that—

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.

If Paul Revere had reached Concord at all that night he would have come to the town before he got to the bridge; but the truth is that he was captured at Lexington, and the rest of his self-imposed duty was performed by Samuel Prescott, a young doctor belonging to Concord, who carried the news of the affray on the green to his townsman. But this is history, and we have only to do with the parade ground, where the provincials marched down from the contiguous slopes to battle for their country. It is a beautiful spot by nature, and capable of every adornment which art can bestow. The lazy stream creeps idly by, and on its banks, where they fell that day, sleep the two British soldiers, the first of the enemy to fall in the struggle for American independence. A stone wall, extending from the river to the highway, has been built over their grave, and a rude stone, rudely carved, tells the place of their sepulture. Near by is the votive tablet raised in 1836 to commemorate the deed, and across the stream, now as then spanned by a simple bridge, is the spot where the "embattled farmers" stood and Davis and Hosmer fell. The new statue of the "minute man" leaving his plough turned in the furrow, but bearing his trusty rifle with him, has been erected here; and here, in sight of the hills from which the provincials filed two and two to the music of the "White Cockade," it will be unveiled on Monday. The scene has changed but little in a hundred years, and the spirit which animated the American people then still survives to find expression on this spot. The hills and fields are still the same, a few fences more and a few stones less being the only changes wrought by time in the arena of the Concord fight. As I stood on this historic ground this morning, the early sunshine bathing the hills with life and light, and recalled all that had ever been told me of that glorious day, the whole scene seemed to reawaken in my imagination, and I could almost see the astonished grenadiers turn and flee by the road they had come, while

——the farmers gave them ball for ball
From behind each fence and barnyard wall,
Chasing the redcoats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

UNCHANGING CONCORD.

Few battle scenes have undergone so few changes. In twelve years the marks of the great struggle at Gettysburg have been more obliterated than the field of Concord fight in a hundred. But Concord is slow to change in any respect. It clings as tenaciously to its old customs as to its old memories. So strikingly is this fact illustrated that it is almost a Puritan village to-day. True, the Irish have come here as they come everywhere where they are needed—Pat to do the farm work, which John Hancock, as a boy, would hardly have deigned to rejoice, and Bridget to do the cooking and baking, in which Dorothy Quincy was an adept; and they have built their snug little Catholic church, surmounted with the symbol so hurtful to the Puritan conscience, right in the heart of the village. So also the poet could sing with truth of Emerson, who is the great high priest of Concord philosophy to-day, as his grandfather was the chief judge and arbiter of Concord theology a hundred years ago, that

'Tis refreshing to old-fashioned people like me
To meet such a primitive pagan as he,
In whose mind all creation is duly respected
As parts of himself—just a little projected.

But, in spite of its Catholic church and its Unitarian departure from old-fashioned Presbyterianism and its pagan philosophy, Concord is still, as I said before, almost a Puritan town, and in proof of it I submit the following curious document, which I encountered everywhere in my rambles over the village:—

COMMONWEALTH
—OF—
MASSACHUSETTS.

MIDDLESEX, ss. To either of the Constables of the Town of Concord.

GREETING:—

You are hereby authorized and directed to notify and warn the qualified voters of the
FIRST PARISH IN CONCORD,
in said County of Middlesex, to meet at the Vestry of the Meeting House of said First Parish,
on MONDAY, the 12th day of April inst.,
at seven and one-half o'clock in the evening, then and there to act and vote upon the following articles, to wit:—

1st—To choose a Moderator.
2d—To hear and act upon the report of the Parish Committee.
3d—To hear and act upon the report of the Trustees of the Congregational Ministerial Fund.
4th—To choose all Parish Officers for the ensuing year.
5th—To see if the Parish will dispense with the Evening Service during the summer months.
6th—To raise money for all Parochial purposes for the ensuing year.
7th—To see if the Parish will fix any time for the Payment of Taxes, or act in any way in regard to the same.

And you are hereby directed to serve this warrant by posting copies thereof, by you attested, in at least three public places in said town, one of which shall be at the door of the Meeting House, eight days and including two Sundays before said 12th day of April, and to have this warrant, with your doings thereon, at said meeting.

Witness our hands this third day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-five.

JOHN BROWN,
HENRY F. SMITH,
GEORGE P. HOW,
} Parish Committee.

A true copy: Attest.

The Constable attests this with his own hand and publishes it, and all the members of the First church are as much bound by it as the people of New York are bound by the action of the Tax Commissioners or whatever body it is that has authority to assess them, so that it will be seen that in Concord religion is still a matter of the State of which the minions of the law have official cognizance. Only one or two parishes besides—probably only Quincy—still retains this relic of Puritanism; but it is, I think, conclusive proof that Concord is unchanging Concord.

THE TOWN LIBRARY OF CONCORD.

But if Concord is slower than most places in some respects it is also faster than all other towns in others. It has, for instance, the best town library in the United States; the most unique, the handsomest and the airiest building; the best selection of books and the largest number and best set of readers. The building is the gift of William Munroe, who was a Boston merchant resident in the town. He planned and built it at his own expense, and left a sufficient fund to prevent it from ever going to decay, and then did not even ask or consent that it should be called by his name. Mr. Munroe's bust has been placed in the library apartment, just in front of the alcove devoted to "Concord authors," and this is the only evidence of his munificence to be seen anywhere about the building. The Concord alcove contains the writings of Emerson, Hawthorne, Thoreau, the Alcotts, father and daughter; Mrs. Jane Austin, and others of scarcely less note than some of these. Among the curiosities of this alcove is a volume of sermons preached in Concord more than 230 years ago. The title of this book is as follows:—

THE GOSPEL COVENANT; OR, THE COVENANT OF GRACE OPENED—

wherein are explained
1. The difference between the covenant of grace and covenant of works.
2. The different administration of the covenant before and since Christ.
3. The benefits and blessings of it.
4. The condition.
5. The properties of it.

Preached in Concord, in New England, by Peter Bulkeley, sometime fellow of John's Colledge, in Cambridge.

Published according to order.

London, printed by M. S. for Benjamin Allen and are to be sold at the Croune, in Popes-head Alley, 1646.

This old book was picked up in London by Mr. George F. Hoar, member of Congress from Worcester, and by him it was presented to the library of his native town two years ago. In such a town, with such a library and such associations and such great men, it is no wonder we should be told—

Yonder, calm as a cloud, Alcott stalks in a dream,
And fancies himself in thy groves, Academe,
With the Parthenon nigh and the olive bees o'er him,
And never a fact to perplex him or bore him,
With a snug room at Plato's when night comes to walk to.
And people from morning till midnight to talk to.

The inhabitants are as remarkable as the town itself; but it would take a volume to tell even half of what I know about them.

CONCORD CELEBRATIONS IN THE PAST.

As Concord fight began the American Revolution, so Concord town has been celebrating it ever since. In 1825, fifty years after the conflict at North Bridge, the corner stone of a monument was laid in the centre of the village to commemorate the event. Edward Everett, then in the freshness and splendor of his powers as an orator, delivered the oration—one of the greatest efforts of his life. In 1836 the modest monument on the site of the British position was erected, and it was for that occasion Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote the splendid hymn now so often quoted. In 1850 there was a general celebration at Concord of all the towns, Lexington participating. On this occasion Robert Rantoul, Jr., of Beverly, was the orator, and Everett was present and made one of the after-dinner speeches. Rufus Choate was also among the guests, and responded to the toast of "Lexington Common and Concord North Bridge," closing with his famous sentiment of "American Nationality." On the platform were Jonathan Harrington, of Lexington, aged ninety-two, and Amos Baker, of Lincoln, of the age of ninety-four, both participants in the events of that grand 19th of April. Baker was in the fight at the bridge, and Harrington the flier of the Lexington company. Both now sleep with their comrades who had gone before, and there are few even of the children of these grand old patriots left to participate in the centennial of their glory. When the next centennial anniversary of the "Concord fight" is reached, none of those who now celebrate its first century of blessings will be alive to commemorate the second; but who can doubt that out of these patriotic festivities, and those which are to follow in the next eight years, liberty will take a new birth and our grandchildren and great-grandchildren receive through us the gift which came from our grandfathers and great-grandfathers. It is a consummation most devoutly to be wished, and we can only pray that the exclamation of Samuel Adams, when he heard the guns at Lexington, "This is a glorious morning!" may prove as truly prophetic in the future as they have proved in the past.

OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION.

CONCORD, Mass., April 15, 1875.

By this rude bridge that crossed the flood.
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the world.

It is only natural, perhaps, that a hundred years after the American Revolution Lexington and Concord should be fighting the first battle of the war over again. Whatever pains we may take to secure the truth of history it is never sure. It was a great point with our ancestors that the war for independence should begin as a war of resistance, and this being the case it becomes a grave and important question with us who fired that first shot, which Lord Chatham predicted would separate the two countries. On the part of the British many blows were struck before the cruel massacre at Lexington aroused the American people to action; but the blows were not returned till that April morning when "a flock of Yankees" met the flower of the British army at Concord Bridge. All this is now a mooted point; but as to the fact, I think there is the amplest testimony. One day those "embattled farmers" fought against the King, and they swore to the occurrences the next before the King's justices of the peace. At that time Lexington did not claim to have returned Major Pitcairn's fire, while Concord boldly avowed the resistance which gave the Old North Bridge the first place in American history. Mr. Edward Everett Hale tells us that when a New England historian related to Henry Clay the story of the depositions which followed the battles of the 19th of April, 1775, the great orator and statesman was much amused and said, "Tell me that again." It somehow seems necessary to tell it once more after the lapse of 100 years, for, notwithstanding the pains that were taken to secure the truth of history, Lexington and Concord are far from agreeing about it to-day. Each is getting up a celebration of its own, and there is almost as much excitement over it as when it was learned from Paul Revere and Ebenezer Dorr and Dr. Samuel Prescott that Lieutenant Colonel Smith's column had been ferried over from Boston to Phipp's farm, in Cambridge, during the night, and was on the way to destroy the provincial stores at Concord. It is a very pretty quarrel as it stands," and has been the source of some bright wit as well as warm controversy. Major Pitcairn's unfortunate pistol-shot on Lexington Common led to the first loss of life in the American Revolution. The volley fired by the British in that historic town killed eight of the patriots and wounded many others, but there was no resistance, and the column pressed on to Concord. Here Smith's force was met by the "Minute Men" from Acton and other neighboring towns, the determination of Revere to

——spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm
For the country folks to be up and arm

having been accomplished far and wide, and the two men killed on the spot where the new statue has been erected were both Acton men. This led to the famous toast at the Union celebration a quarter of a century ago, proposed by an Acton man:—"Concord fight—Concord gave the ground and Acton furnished the men." But as between Lexington and Concord it has come to be no joking matter, though the fact that they should be quarrelling over the glories of the past in their present determined way is in itself a joke, the whole point at issue being at what point the war began. This is a poor pun I know, but I do not believe the after-dinner speeches next Monday will supply a better one, and at any rate it is not more absurd than to see these people fighting the first battle of the Revolution all over again. To my mind the quaint phraseology of a hundred years ago determines the whole matter in dispute, and forever settles the question as to which place is entitled to the most credit for that day when

——the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the world.

It was the custom of our grandfathers to speak of "Lexington alarm" and "Concord fight," and "the shot heard round the world" was not fired till grenadier and patriot met face to face at Concord Bridge. There never was a "battle of Lexington" at all until after "Concord fight," as the bridge has been telling the "moniment" now these many years, and I for one, while confessing a proper American reverence for everybody's grandfather, do not hesitate to say that on the 19th of April, 1775, Ralph Waldo Emerson's had the advantage of Theodore Parker's. It may be true enough that when old John Parker saw the grenadiers coming as he waited for them by the meeting-house in Lexington, his single drum beating the first note of resistance all the while, he uttered the words attributed to him by tradition, "If they mean to have war, let it begin here." But it is more certain that the response to Pitcairn's even more famous utterance, "Ye villains, ye rebels, disperse! Damn ye! Why don't ye lay down your arms and disperse!" was complete, if not instant obedience. William Emerson, of Concord, on the other hand, testified in his diary that he "was uneasy till the fire was returned," and he saw it returned with interest as soon almost as it was received. Captain Parker himself declared that he ordered his company to disperse and not to fire, and it is only repeating an old story to say that the Lexington patriots did not return the fire of their enemies, Mr. Edward Everett Hale to the contrary notwithstanding. It must have been so or else the depositions which Mr. Hale tells us were to "secure the truth of history" were a cowardly lie. This is a conclusion I, for one, would be slow to accept, and it certainly reflects no discredit upon the 130 militia of the Lexington company—only sixty of whom could be hastily got together when the cry was raised, "The Regulars are coming"—that they failed to resist 800 grenadiers trained to arms and seeking to provoke a conflict.

THE PREPARATIONS FOR WAR.

Before attempting to picture the historic scenes, so full of fruitful themes for the historian and poet as well as the patriot, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the events which led to the "Concord fight." The province of Massachusetts, and, indeed, all the provinces, under the leadership of men like Hancock and the Adamses, John and Samuel, were ripe for rebellion, if not yet prepared for revolution. A provincial Congress had been established at Salem and Concord, and the militia was organized for resistance in case of necessity. Military stores were provided, and this quiet Massachusetts village, now especially remarkable as the home of philosophy and the seat of the muses, then the principal inland town in New England, was the chief storehouse of the provisions. Every farmer's barn, the Town House, the Court House, the tavern shed and the miller's loft all were filled with the muniments and munitions of war. Tents, cannon, cartridges, canteens, cartouch boxes, round shot, grape, canister, shells, spades, picks, billhooks, axes, wheelbarrows, wooden plates and spoons, bolsters, belts and saddles, rice, fish and flour and many other articles "too numerous to mention," were collected here, and Colonel James Barrett was made the custodian of all these treasures. The Committee of Safety and Supplies by which this astonishing outfit had been gathered—the tents alone numbering 1,100—aware of its dangerous character as well as its precious quality, not only enjoined Colonel Barrett to "keep watch day and night" over the stores, but never to "so much as mention the name powder, lest our enemies should take advantage of it." At the same time General Gage had an army at Boston ready to quell the spirit of resistance everywhere manifest, and as the Concord secret could not be kept, such secrets being as unsafe as a woman's, the capture of the Concord store houses and the destruction of the stores was a necessity. He took his measures accordingly, but his movements were as difficult of concealment as the presence of the military stores at Concord. If tories stole to Boston to tell of the doings of the patriots the patriots were equally alert and active in watching the operations of the British. Gage's intended movement was revealed even before it began. A babbling woman, partly intoxicated, spoke of it in Hall's distillery. A sergeant major communicated it to Jasper, the gunsmith. No sooner had it begun than Dorr, the leather dresser, carried the news over Boston Neck and through Roxbury to Lexington, while Paul Revere, impatiently waiting for the signal lights in the spire of the old North church, was ready to gallop away on the same errand. The story of that midnight journey has often been told, but never so well as in Longfellow's beautiful verse, which rivals even Buchanan Read's dashing description of the not less famous ride of "Sheridan, Sheridan, Cavalry Sheridan," nearly a hundred years later. It was necessary to pass through the village to reach Clark's house, where Hancock and Adams were staying, and one can almost see, as with Revere's eyes to-day,

——the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed;
And the meeting house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

MARCH OF THE GRENADIERS.

The news thus scattered over the country was responded to by the minute-men in all the towns from Cambridge to Concord, and Colonel Smith, who was in command of the column, saw the necessity of sending back for reinforcements, even before he was fairly on his way. These, under Lord Percy, did not reach him till he was far on his return, beaten, dispirited and almost destroyed, and it is no wonder that Percy, too, was doomed to disaster when it is remembered that a Roxbury boy, who sat on a wall to see him pass, recalling the legend of his noble house, ominously said to him, "You go out by Yankee Doodle but you will come back by Chevy Chase." The main force left Boston after ten o'clock at night on the 18th, the good people of that town being usually in their beds before that hour. Embarking in boats supplied by the naval vessels in the harbor, the little army was conveyed from the bottom of the Common, near where the old Providence depot stood, to Lechmere's Point, not far from where the Insane Asylum now stands. Thence it took up its march through Cambridge and Metonomy, now West Cambridge, toward Lexington. Major Pitcairn was in the advance with six companies of light infantry. It is not certain whether he knew that old John Parker, the grandfather of Theodore, was waiting to receive him on the little green in front of Lexington church, but at all events he did his work so well that Parker believed no enemy was coming, in spite of the news which Revere had brought, and dismissed his company to meet at the tap of the drum. Pitcairn captured all his scouts except one, Thaddeus Bowman, who reached Lexington just in time to allow the militia to form in two ranks a little north of the meeting house, while the English were so near they could hear the drum call the men to arms. The march was immediately hastened to a double-quick, Pitcairn galloping in advance and uttering that historic exclamation which will make his name execrated while the history of the American Revolution is recited. There were some desultory shots from the English, and then a volley from the whole line, the Americans being quickly dispersed, with a loss of eight killed and nine wounded. They sleep near where they fell, a modest monument noting their last resting place. There may have been one or two shots fired in response, though even on this point authorities differ, but the English gave three cheers in recognition of victory, and pressed on to Concord, where they captured the town and took possession of both bridges.

THE SCENE OF ACTION.

Sunday was a splendid day. The skies were blue and bright and the air as balmy as in midsummer. Though the prospect was not so fine as on the 19th of April, 1775, the grass not yet being green nor the trees in blossom, it was just the day to see, for the first time, the scene of action at North Bridge, Concord, one hundred years ago. In the afternoon I walked down Monument street to the bridge to look at the spot where freedom's battle in America began with shot and shell. Somebody told me an ancestor of General Grant was in the fray, and as I looked upon the scene—two hillsides gently sloping down to the placid river which creeps rather than runs between, and recalled the fact that the President is to be here in a few days to take part in the coming festivities, I thought of an incidental chat I once had with him on the art of war, which has a peculiar appositeness when applied to the events of the field upon which I was gazing. This was the conversation:—

"You have lately returned from Cuba, Mr. Correspondent?"

"Yes, Your Excellency."

"How do the Spaniards and Cubans fight?"

"From different sides of hill, Mr. President."

"And where do they put the hills?"

"Between them."

"Ah!" he said, laughing very heartily, "I don't think we ever did that, but in our war both sides occasionally found a stream between the two armies a great convenience."

It must be confessed it was a decided convenience to both sides at "Concord fight." If there had been no river there would have been no bridge and if there had been no bridge, I believe, there would have been no battle. It was a nice, romantic battle field to march down to; it was even, as the British found it, a good place to run away from. I think the stream gave courage to both sides—to the Americans to attack, to the English to flee. As I looked upon the scene I could fancy I saw Colonel Smith's force holding the bridge, while the lovely slopes beyond were made to appear terribly earnest by the little band of patriots whom Emerson has so felicitously called the "embattled farmers." Slowly the gathering "minute-men," too weak in numbers to meet the enemy, had retreated before the forces of His Majesty the King until the town was completely in the hands of the invader, while its defenders were on Ponkawtassett Hill, nearly a mile away on the other side of the river. The village of Concord is built along the outer base of a semicircular ridge which extends from Hawthorne's new house to the Old Manse, from which he gathered so many delicate mosses. The enemy entered by the Lexington road, covering the ridges with his skirmishers as he advanced. When first seen by the Concord militia he had passed the spot where Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson resides and was near what is now the centre of the town. As measures had been taken the day before to remove the stores Colonel Smith found little to destroy, but he halted his forces for some time as if waiting for the reinforcements he had demanded. During his stay Major Pitcairn, who was a swaggering fellow, but no Lord Dundreary for all that, entered the village tavern and poured out a glass of brandy, which he sweetened to his taste, but not finding a spoon to stir it he mixed it with his fingers. At the same time he said in a half-boastful fashion that that was the way he would stir up the blood of the Yankees before the day was over. Some hours later he was unhorsed as he was going away, defeated and disgraced. In the earliest engraving of these scenes he is represented as standing with a spy-glass in his hand in the old cemetery in the middle of the village, the graveyard forming a part of the ridge, and being to this day a striking feature of the old town.

"CONCORD FIGHT."

While Pitcairn was drinking in the tavern, and surveying the scene from the ridge above the cemetery, the patriot force was rapidly augmenting, and Smith's delay proved precious time to them. At last the main body of the enemy moved once more, however, and, passing the Old Manse, where the young minister of the town, Ralph Waldo Emerson's grandfather, then resided, gathered near the North Bridge, which commanded the village and separated it from its defenders. A detachment was sent across to search for the stores believed to be secreted at Colonel Barrett's house, two miles distant, while another detachment guarded the South Bridge, which was further up the river. It was still as early as nine o'clock in the morning, and as the spring was a forward one the scene must have been exceedingly lovely and picturesque. The present season is a late one, and water still covers much of the ground that was solid earth on April 19, 1775; but in spite of this it is difficult even now to find many lovelier spots. Concord is fortunate not only in owning a battle field—the first in the history of the Republic—but in owning one that is so beautiful. It is impossible to look upon this ground, so rich in historic associations and made so grand by the heroic determination of a few men, without feeling that nature did well in lavishing so much beauty upon it. Here are the hills as of yore, changed only in a few unimportant particulars. There are fewer boulders, perhaps, and some stone fences cut up the slopes into fields; but the fields are the same, and they form the Buttrick estate now as they did then. Major John Buttrick, who owned the battle field, commanded the attacking party, and he left a proud legacy to his children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren, not only in his farm, but in his fame. His grandson, Stedman Buttrick, died only last December; but his descendants still look with pride upon the scene of his exploits, and there are still those of his blood to celebrate his deeds of one hundred years ago. Down the King's highway, side by side with Major Buttrick, marched Captain Isaac Davis, of Acton, who, with a member of his company, Abner Hosmer, was the only man to fall in the struggle at the bridge. It had been the purpose of the Concord men all the morning to resist—to return shot for shot. "Let us stand our ground," said William Emerson, when the liberty pole had been abandoned and a new position taken. "If we die let us die here." More prudent counsels prevailed, and an hour later, when urged to attack Colonel Eleazer Brooks demurred, "It will not do," he said, "for us to begin the war." But Isaac Davis had started that morning from Acton, declaring, "It is the King's highway, and we have the right to march upon it if we march to Boston." Smoke rose from the town, and Colonel Barrett gave Major Buttrick the order to lead the attacking party down the hill. "Men, if you will follow me," Buttrick said, "we will go now and see what they are about." On the way he met Davis at the head of the minute-men, and while the two were marching into the jaws of death side by side, the Acton hero said, "There is not a man of my company who is afraid." Two planks had been taken up from the bridge, and more were to be removed, but the Americans ordered the British to desist. The response was the volley which killed Davis and Hosmer. The fire was returned with deadly effect, and in a moment the astonished grenadiers were in confusion and retreating. Their dead were left where they fell. Reinforcements checked the stampede for the moment, but the example of those at the bridge was contagious, and soon the whole column was flying by the road it came. The Americans crossed the hills in the rear of Mr. Keyes' house, still standing between the battle field and the village, and after traversing the meadows beyond the ridge and being joined by the men from Billerica and Reading, again poured the enemy battle at Merriam's Corner. Words cannot more fitly describe the scene at that time than those chosen by Mr. Longfellow when he tells us:—

How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

THE STAMPEDE OF THE GRENADIERS.

It was high noon when the stampede became irretrievable, and such was his despair that tradition says Colonel Smith would have surrendered at Merriam's Corner if he could have found any one to accept his sword. But the pursuit was as disorderly as the retreat, and battle followed battle all the way to Cambridge. The King's troops went by the King's highway, and the Provincials kept to the fields and woods. Most of the timber has since disappeared, and only a few pines gathered in clusters here and there denote the appearance the country must have presented. The road no longer runs over the surface of the hills, but has been cut down and graded to meet modern necessities. Over the rough and uneven wagon path the British grenadier ran and battled as best he could, while the farmers, skilled in the use of the rifle, and deadly in its aim, dropped them dead or wounded in great numbers by the wayside. Merriam's Corner is Merriam's Corner still, but it no longer shows any traces of the second conflict on the spot by the brook where two more British soldiers bit the dust. A little further on was the wood, and on both sides of it there was a severe struggle, first with the Sudbury company, and then with the whole pursuing force just at the edge of Lincoln, where the severest encounter of the day took place. But every hillside was a battle field, almost every tree a fortress, and as the attack continued till the grenadiers rushed down the hill into Lexington, up which they had marched so gayly in the early morning. Here Captain Parker and his militia had their opportunity, and they improved it, and here, at two o'clock in the afternoon, occurred the last regular conflict of the day. This was the real battle of Lexington, but the massacre of the morning did more to arouse the American people on that day and for many days than all the struggles of that eventful 19th of April. At Lexington Colonel Smith was joined by Lord Percy's brigade; but the retreat was continued after a short rest and there was no respite for the unerring aim of the Provincials until the beaten grenadiers reached Cambridge and were safe under the guns in the harbor. The British lost 300 men that day, probably many more, while the American loss was less than 100. The King lost, besides, an empire in America, for the war of independence had at last begun. Out of the irregular pursuit sprung regular organization, and soon there was an army of patriots in Charlestown. It was indeed "a glorious morning," as Samuel Adams said when he heard the shots of the massacre at Lexington, but the glories of the evening were even more effulgent, and "Concord fight" gave birth to Bunker Hill and the Fourth of July and all the grand achievements which have made the American name honored wherever the story of that is told.